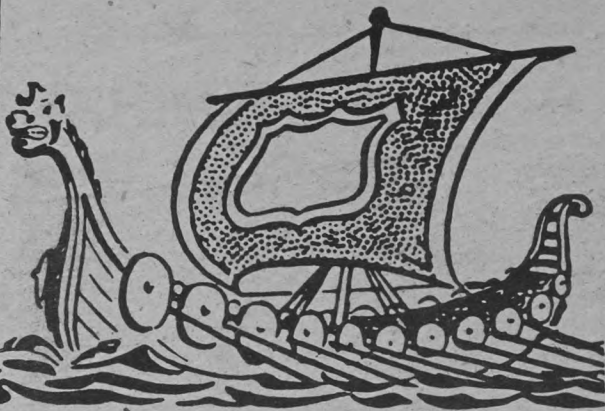


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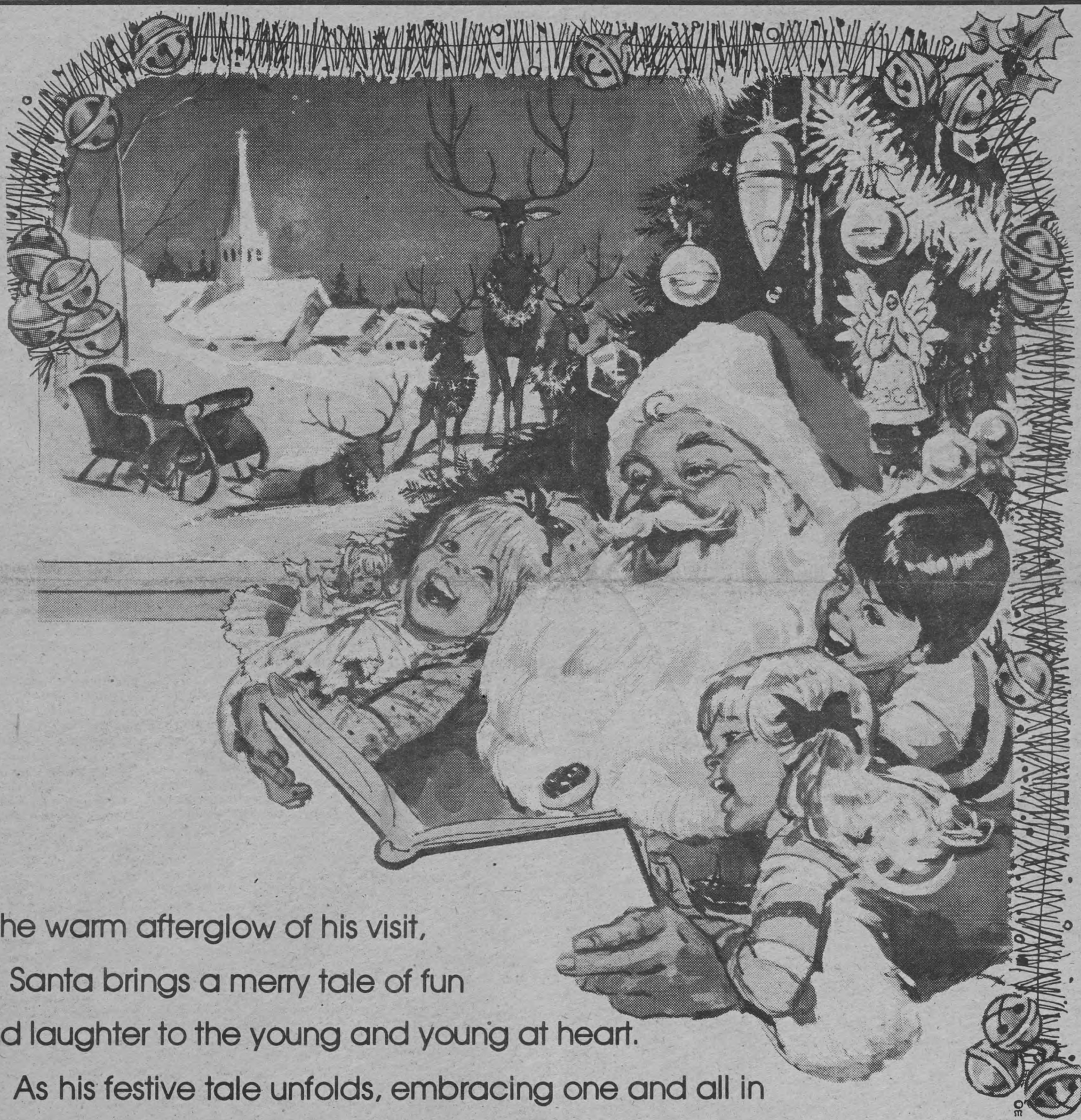


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DECEMBER - JANUARY



In the warm afterglow of his visit,
Santa brings a merry tale of fun
and laughter to the young and young at heart.

As his festive tale unfolds, embracing one and all in
the loving spirit of Christmas, we add a footnote of thanks for
our devoted friends and patrons and wish you

A Very Merry, Merry Christmas

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Scandinavian Centre News

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Non-members may subscribe to the Scandinavian Centre News at a cost of \$6.00 for the above time period.

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CENTRE OPERATIONS:

Christmas parties have arrived with a vengeance — by Christmas the staff is going to be exhausted.

We have been making a small profit each month since August, and will be publishing quarterly statements commencing with the New Year in order to keep you informed.

NEWSPAPER:

Lucky we weren't holding our breath waiting for someone to decide the experiences of a Scandinavian pioneer were worth writing down. Obviously apathy is alive and well.

BUILDING PROJECT:

It would be nice if SOMETHING went smoothly occasionally.

Our application for the land on 97th Street south of 51st Avenue passed the City's Economic Affairs Committee and was to go to Council on September 23rd. That morning we received a call telling us that because the City had passed a "Land Use Bylaw" in July, which replaced the Zoning Bylaw, our project no longer qualified under the new 'districting' (read 'zoning').

After a meeting with the City's Real Estate & Housing Depart-

ment, our architect presented our case to the Development Appeal Board on November 30th in the hope of receiving permission to build on that parcel of land. However, the Board refused our application on the grounds that they did not have the authority to grant such permission.

Back we went to the Real Estate & Housing Department where it was ascertained that, in order to have the zoning varied on the parcel, we would have to go the route through committees and Council, a procedure which would take a minimum of four months with no guarantee of the final decision.

We were, however, shown another City-owned parcel of approximately the same size located at 95th Street and 42nd Avenue. It is also bordered by the Whitemud Freeway, and along this perimeter is a 15-foot berm. While this site is not as visible, it does have other advantages, such as being a corner property. The zoning also allows our project.

We urge you to go out and look at this location.

HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON!

ALBERTA CULTURAL

HERITAGE COUNCIL MEETING

"Cultural Diversity and Television"

by Anja Sahuri

The guest speaker was Adrienne Clarkson, award-winning television journalist, now in her fifth year as co-host on CBC's highly rated program, The Fifth Estate, for which she is also a project developer, and writes and researches most of her own material. She spoke of her personal viewpoint of 'Cultural Diversity and Television'. Being born in Hong Kong, she also touched on the subject of race and minority groups, as well as the importance of preserving one's own culture at home, etc.

Community Viewpoint —

Dr. Baha Abu-Laban, Professor of Sociology at University of Alberta and a Director of the Alberta Cultural Heritage Council, spoke of the community viewpoint. During his very informative speech he also said "...It is a truism that the function of the mass media, television included, is to "inform" and "entertain". In addition, however, television, no less and perhaps more than the other mass media, can and does mould public opinion, provide a unifying force and hold people together, enforce and sometimes create social norms, and transmit the social and cultural heritage from one generation to the next. In order to appreciate the potency of television, just consider one statistic. It has been reported that by the age of 12, a Canadian child will have seen 12,000 hours of television. This is twice the number of hours the same child will have spent in school. By my own calculation, with 12,000 hours of further schooling, a high school graduate could be trained to become a lawyer, an engineer and a pilot, all at the same time!"

Two other distinguished people

presented their views. Peter Herndorf spoke on Industry Viewpoint and Ralph Hart on Regulatory Viewpoint.

CBC —

An interesting point that should be noted is that the services provided by the CBC include reaching 99% of 23 million Canadians. The CBC operates two national television networks, four radio stations, a northern service and an international service. It broadcasts in two official languages and in ten native languages.

TV Programming —

It was noted that while programming of multicultural nature has materialized to some extent on all networks, third language broadcasting is materializing slowly and is reflected by the developing complexity of Canadian broadcasting as a whole, and television programming for specialized audiences has not become possible. It was also mentioned that access to television viewing is not necessarily available through the CBC and commercial networks, but through local cable systems as well.

This conference was the first time that the meeting was devoted by Council to television programming.

On Saturday evening the Council was invited by Ukrainian Ladies Association to attend their annual Fall Ball and the celebration of Alberta's 75th Anniversary, as well as the 50th Anniversary of the Alberta Provincial Executive of the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada.

Attending this meeting on behalf of Scandinavian Groups were Solveig Nordhagen of Grand Prairie; Linnea Lodge and Anne Sahuri, both from Edmonton.

A CHRISTMAS WISH

James E. Feig

May all your gifts at Christmas be Bright packages beneath your tree, Filled with blessings from above And cheerful smiles from those you love

Filled with happiness untold, Lasting friendships, new and old; Peace and joy, contentment; too, Enough to last the whole year through.

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE!!!

If you haven't already done so, REMEMBER to send in your \$5.00 . Clip out the subscription form on the back page and send it to us right away!

And please — use the name that appears on your paper so that there isn't any confusion? Thank you.

HELP!

We are going to need four Directors when the annual meeting rolls around!

This is a crucial time for the Centre, and we cannot stress too strongly how important it is that we have interested and enthusiastic candidates for these positions. If we cannot find at least four people willing to lend their support and contribute a small amount of time, we'll be in real trouble.

We're well on in the planning of a new building with the kind of Scandinavian restaurant operation of which we can be proud — and (the main purpose) one which will pay for our cultural area and enable us to expand cultural functions. Our groups have made considerable sacrifices over the past few years; our new project will end those problems. We have excellent building and finance committees, and this if of great assistance to the Board.

But if everyone is going to "let George do it", it just might be that "George" is going to have the same attitude. It's entirely up to you shareholders out there. And you don't have to belong to an ethnic group. If you want to be part of the exciting developments which are taking place, let us know. Phone Astrid Hope — 469-4747 — and give her your name and phone number for the Nominating Committee.

Skier Elected to Hall of Fame

Irvin Servold of Devon was elected to the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame at a banquet held on October 11th in Calgary.

Mr. Servold has been involved in the Skiing Association since 1955, National Chairman for the Cross-Country Skiing Association since 1958, and is presently National Combined Chairman. He is a cross-country and jumping specialist. He represented Canada at the Winter Olympic Games in 1956 and 1960,

and competed in the World Championships in 1961 in Oslo, Norway.

Irvin organized programs for certification of cross-country instructors, spending many hours conducting clinics for skiers and officials.

The Servolds, originally from Camrose, have long been known in the field of skiing. It is timely that Irvin has been officially recognized and honoured for his continued skiing contribution.



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Scandinavian Seminar is now accepting applications for its 1981-1982 academic year abroad in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. This unique learning experience is designed for college students, graduates and other adults who want to study in a Scandinavian country, becoming part of another culture and learning its language.

After orientation and a 3-week intensive language course, often followed by a family stay, students are placed individually at Scandinavian folk schools or other specialized institutions, where they live and study with Scandinavians of diverse backgrounds. The folk schools are small, residential educational communities intended mainly for young adults. Both historically and socially, these schools have played an important part in the development of the Scandinavian countries. Midway through the folk school year, all the Seminar students and staff meet in the mountains of Norway to discuss the year's studies and experiences.

Because the Scandinavian countries are small, open and accessible, the year provides an unusual opportunity for the student to explore his or her particular field of interest by doing an independent study project. On the basis of a detailed written evaluation of their work, most college students receive full or partial academic credit for their year.

The fee, covering tuition, room, board and all coarse-connected travels in Scandinavia, is \$5,400 American. Interest-free loans are granted on the basis of need, as are a few partial scholarships.

For further information, please write to:

SCANDINAVIAN SEMINAR
100 East 85th Street
New York, N.Y. 10028



CAROLINE GUNNARSON

In olden days the road to church was long and strewn with hazards for the farm folk of sparsely populated rural Iceland. Yet the faithful braved all obstacles, though according to ancient folklore, many of them were brought about by supernatural powers with evil intent.

EVENSONG —

Of special importance was even-song on the Holy Eve of Christmas. Every soul in the household eagerly looked forward to this service, yet one must always be left at home to guard the house. To survive the lonely watch on Christmas Eve with one's life and reason intact was a great and unusual feat; for all sorts of beings came out of the stones, the hills and the mountains to harass the person who sat out the Holy Night alone. Elfin visitors would take over the house, decorate it with gold, silver, lights and garlands, and stage their Christmas ball in it, the dancers decked out in silks, velvets and precious gems. If the watcher stayed calm and reasonable till daybreak, the visitors sometimes had to flee, leaving all these treasures behind. But more often, the pious found the one they had left behind stark mad on their return from church.

GIGANTIC TROLLS —

Night trolls were often abroad, too, on Christmas Eve. Though other Nordics are short of stature and stocky, those native to Iceland are of gigantic proportions, ravenous eaters and fond of human flesh, if they happen to be the barbarous and evil types. Good or evil,

THE EVIL WIGHTS OF HOLY EVE

(from the Icelandic Canadian)

they seem to have an eye for the dainter type of feminine beauty seen in normal humans, and have been known to resort to many kinds of sorcery in their romantic forays into human communities.

The night troll has the unique weakness of not being able to survive the light of the day. It must go about its business at night and retreat to its own habitat before daybreak. If it gets caught by the first rays of the sun at daybreak, it turns to stone.

Many of Iceland's great rocks and boulders, even high, steep mountains started out as night trolls who failed to get the job done, forgot themselves in their eagerness and were caught by the rising sun.

LEGENDS —

The story translated here is taken from "Trollasögur, urval", an anthology from a collection of legends about trolls by the eminent collector of Icelandic folk tales, the late Jon Arnason.

THE NIGHT TROLL

It happened on one farm, that whoever watched over the house while the others attended even-song on Christmas night, was found the next morning either dead or mad. This was a worry to the household, and few were willing to stay home on Christmas night. One Holy Eve, a young woman offered to watch over the house, to the relief of all the others, who then set off for church and left her alone. The girl sat in the living room and crooned to a child she held in her lap.

During the night she heard a voice at the window:

Fair is your hand,
My swift one, my sharp one,
Dilli-dilli-do.

She replied:
It never dipped in dirt,
My devil, you're evil
Korri-korri-ro.

The voice at the window:
Lovely is your eye,
My swift one, my sharp one,
Dilli-dilli-do.

She replied:
It never looked on evil,
My devil, you're evil,
Korri-korri-ro.

The voice at the window:
Dainty is your foot,
My swift one, my sharp one,
Dilli-dilli-do.

She replied:
It never trod in dirt,
My devil, you're evil,
Korri-korri-ro.

The voice at the window:
Day dawns in the east,
My swift one, my sharp one,
Dilli-dilli-do.

The girl replied:
Stand alone and turn to stone,
But do no harm to anyone.
Korri-korri-ro.

With that the evil wight fell from the window, but when the people returned from church the next morning, a huge rock stood in their path, and there it stands to this day. The young woman related all she heard during her lonely watch. She had seen nothing, for she never glanced toward the voice, and the wight at the window had been a night troll.

Bulletin Board

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First and Foremost

We give them the most precious of all gifts; the principles of brotherly love and the love of God, as taught so many years ago by Christ, whose birth we celebrate.

We Give Them Our Attention

For one day it will be too late.

We Give Them a Sense of Value

A place for the individual in the scheme of things, with all that accrues to the individual: self-reliance, courage, conviction, self-respect and respect of others.

We Give Them a Sense of Humour

Laughter leavens life.

We Give Them the Meaning of Discipline

If we falter at discipline, life will do it for us.

We Give Them the Will to Work

Satisfying work is not the lasting joy, but knowing that a job is well-done, is

We Give Them the Talent for Sharing

That it's not so much that we give, as to what we share.

We Give Them the Love of Justice

The bulwark against violence and oppression, and the repository of human dignity.

We Give Them the Passion of Truth

Founded on precept of example, truth is the beginning of every good thing; the power and the faith engendering mutual trust.

We Give Them the Beacon of Hope

Which lights all darkness.

We Give Them the Knowledge of Being Loved

Beyond the demand for reciprocity, praise of blame, for those loved are never lost.

What Shall We Give the Children?

The open sky, the brown earth, the leafy trees, the golden sand, the blue water, the stars in their courses, and the awareness of these; birdsongs, butterflies, clouds and rainbows, sunlight, moonlight, firelight; a large hand reaching down for a small hand, impromptu praise, an unexpected kiss, a straight answer, a glisten of enthusiasm and the sense of wonder, long days to be merry in and nights without fear, and the memory of a good home.

These Things We Shall Give the Children.

(Author Unknown)

LEARN TO WEAVE IN FINLAND

For the third consecutive year, North American visitors to Finland have a chance to play and work; combine a fun holiday while becoming acquainted with Finland's traditional and contemporary design. Two 12-day courses will be open to advanced weavers and to novices. The first session will run from July 1 to 12; the other, July 17-28 in 1981. Each student will be offered individual instruction.

LONG RECOGNIZED —

Finland has long been recognized, world-wide, as a leader in textile design so students will be tutored by experienced teachers, with one instructor for each seven or eight participants.

There will be morning and afternoon weaving sessions highlighting: Finnish methods of weaving, including warping and tie-up, studying yarns and calculations, basic weaves and drafting, natural, dying, braid weaving, carding and spinning.

IN SOUTHERN FINLAND —

The weaving workshops, sponsored by Toika Loom Company, the largest loom-makers in the Scandinavian country, will be conducted in a school in Southern Finland. Students, who will live in twin-bedded rooms (singles available) will each be assigned to at least one counter-march loom for weaving.

The 12 day program will also include a couple of excursions and a visit to the Toika factory. During free time, weavers can sightsee.

Tuition for the course is approximately \$770, American, which includes: instruction and use of looms, accommodation in twin-bedded rooms for the 12 days, three meals daily and excursions connected with the course. Air fare is not included.

For particulars, contact: Hanslin Travel Service, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019, (212) 489-0888.

OCTOBERFEST

by Olaf Sveen

Not very long ago Edmonton had a distinguished visitor from Vancouver, Gunnar Warolin, owner and editor of Canada's only Norwegian newspaper, "Norrøna". He was here to attend meetings of the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism, held at the Terrace Inn.

Gunnar along with friend, world traveller, and TV-personality, Horst Koehler, came to see us at the Hofbrauhaus, after a hard day's work at the meetings. It is easy to see why both of them were picked to be at the Council, because both have been involved with many cultures for a long time. Horst said he had been around the world 84 times, and when I asked him which was the nicest country he had ever seen, right away he said - Canada!

Knowing I was a Norwegian, he said: "Norway is a fine country, but you wouldn't want to live there now, Olaf, because life is much more complicated there than here now." But he went on to say: "The best food I ever tasted was in Tromsø, Norway, and it was reindeer-tongue." And here I have been living in the false belief that "lutefisk" was tops!

There was lots of activity at the Hofbrauhaus. Rudi Kirmayer and his Schuhplattlers were there and showed us some fine dancing, and also some acrobatics and clowning



Gunnar Warolin and Olaf Sveen at the Jaeger Lounge

around. Canada's Mr. Polka, Gaby Haas and the band looked after the dance music. Helmut Lenzinger, a jack of all trades at the Hofbrauhaus, sings with the band, occasionally, and he also yodels; his yodelling is improving all the time,

which is a good thing, because the first time we heard him yodel, it was agreed it couldn't get worse, so he had no other way to go but up. Helmut has a lot of class.

Gunnar and Horst enjoyed themselves at the Hofbrauhaus, and had nothing but good things to say about it, and they said it was unique. They said the music was great, and that they liked Gaby's accordion playing. I fool around with an accordion myself, and to tell one accordion player that another one is good, is something like telling Pierre Trudeau that Peter Lougheed is a hell of a nice guy. But after all these years working with Gaby Haas, it didn't bother me at all. People often say about accordion players: "This guy plays like Frankie Yankovic", or: "This guy plays like Kalle Jularbo". Something similar can be said about Gaby Haas: "He plays like Gaby Haas", and we are all glad to have a good player like Gaby around.

Gunnar and Horst met a lot of friendly people at the Hofbrauhaus, and I am sure they both went back to Vancouver with nothing but good memories. We hope they will come back to visit us again soon.



Bearded World Traveller with Edmonton friends at the Hofbrauhaus

Welcome To NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

sponsored by the
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on

DECEMBER 31, 1980

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= CULTURAL CORNER =

by Astrid Hope,
Cultural Director,
Solglyt Lodge,
Sons of Norway

On October 20th Sons of Norway hosted a reception at the Court of Immigration when about 70 persons received their Canadian Citizenship; approximately fifteen countries were represented. Bea Huser, Betty Broen and Astrid Hope served the lunch and coffee.

The Freeloaders and escorts

were invited by Aspelund Lodge, Red Deer, to their third annual Lutefisk Supper on November 15th, where they entertained with dance music. 375 guests were hosted, and part of the superb entertainment saw two dozen folk dancers in colourful costumes who performed a la Sig Arneberg, comedy skits, and Vic Elverum, Edmonton singer and composer.

At suppertime Astrid was presented with a surprise gift of a fully automatic camera by the Freeloaders.

NORDSTJARNAN NEWS

by Annie Holmlund

Congratulations to Cliff and Mona Robins on their 25th Wedding Anniversary. A celebration was held at the Falun Community Centre with all of the original wedding attendants, as well as numerous family and friends attending. Cliff and Mona are now holidaying in Hawaii.

At the regular meeting on November 4th the Lodge welcomed three new members: Mr. and Mrs. Berman, and Sharon Brown.

Louis and Karen Thorsen are visiting in Ottawa with their son and family, Ken and Joyce Thorsen.

The community was sorry to hear of the death of Phyllis Hildebrand. Sincere sympathy to her parents, Gus and Elenora Tabler and her family.

Harry and Lyn Holmlund have an exchange student from Quebec staying with them and going to school at Pigeon Lake Regional High School, Falun, with their daughter Denise.

Annie Holmlund was in Calgary to attend the Branting Lodge Lutefisk Supper. While there she also attended the Roger Whittaker concert.

Congratulations to Betty Watson on her recent engagement.

Nordstjarnan Lutefisk and Meatball supper is November 22nd at the Moose Hall, Wetaskiwin. Everyone is welcome.

Congratulations to the Buford Lodge bowling team, as well as individual winners Tina Combs, Richard Quitau, Bertha Edin and Lloyd Ericson at the District Bowling.

FINNISH SOCIETY

SYs

by Anja Sahuri

Congratulations to Arvi Liimainen who won the award for the Best Promotional Film "Treasure", Kicking Horse Productions, during the November 14th, 1980 Alberta Film Awards presentation in Calgary.

A surprise house-warming and baby-shower was held for Pertti and Raija Lampimaki on Nov. 16, 1980 at their home. About twenty friends came to wish Mr. & Mrs. Lampimaki good luck in their new home and to bring best wishes for the baby-to-be.

On Sunday, November 23, 1980, Pastor Jukka Joensuu will be speaking at Augustana Lutheran Church at 8 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend. Coffee and fellowship hour will follow the Service.

On Dec. 5th, 1980 Pastor Jantti will be speaking at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Hovila, 6509 - 12 Avenue, at 8 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

The Finnish Society of Edmonton will hold their annual Christmas party at South Clareview Community Hall, 3450 - 132A Avenue, on Dec. 13, 1980 starting at 7 p.m. Tickets are available from any member of the executive at \$10.00 each. Everyone is reminded to bring a small gift to Santa's bag. "Joulupuuro" and other goodies are available. So come and enjoy a good old fashioned "pikku-joulu".



Children's Christmas party will be held on Dec. 21st, 1980 at the Scandinavian Centre, starting at 2 p.m. Parents are reminded to bring a small gift with the name to Santa's bag. Coffee available to parents and grand-parents while the children will perform the program.

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO THE BANG-UP NEW YEAR'S PARTY AT THE SCANDINAVIAN CENTRE, MUSIC BY A GOOD ORCHESTRA.

FOOD AND LOTS OF FUN. BRING YOUR FRIENDS ALSO. For further information and tickets, please contact any member of the executive or phone Pentti Sipari at 462-7261.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL READERS. HAUSKAA JOULUA JA ONNELLISTA UUTTA VUOTTA KAIKILLE LUKIJOILLE.



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SOLGLYT SPOTLIGHT



New Officers for the 1981 Year

At the annual meeting held on November 12th the following Officers were elected to serve as the executive of Solglyt Lodge:

President - Janette Burt
Vice-President - John Fredrikson
Treasurer - George Stewart
Councillor - Gary Johnson
Assistant Marshall - Knut Lie
Assistant Social Director - Roy Sundby
Inner Guard - Harry Huser
Trustees - Gladys Clark
Wally Broen
Harv Haugen
Historian - Janette Burt
Sports Director - Verner Steinbru
Music Director - Shirley Morsch

Cultural Director - Astrid Hope
Assistant Cultural Director - Harry Huser
Publicity Director - Bob Burt
Unger Venner Director - Tom Haugen

A bridal shower was held on October 19th for Inga (daughter of Irene and Nels Hovde) and David Majeau by Sons of Norway member in the Dania Room at the Scandinavian Centre. The couple was recently married and plan to move to Drayton Valley at the end of this month. Best wishes for the future, Inga and David!

Friends of Ole Dahl extend their best wishes for a speedy recovery.

PEACE ON EARTH AMONG THE PEOPLE

by Anja Sahuri

Very soon the church bells will ring again, bringing again the message around the world, PEACE ON EARTH. Many will slow down and listen to the message of peace and contentment. Those are the qualities that we need in life, not only at Christmas but always throughout the year.

Have we lost the meaning of Christmas?

As I listen to people, who start their frantic Christmas shopping early in the fall telling how exhausted they are and how they wish that Christmas would be over, it makes me wonder what has gone wrong. This is not how it used to be.

We used to expect Christmas with elation, preparing for it with joyful expectation, of seeing a happy surprised smile when someone dear to us opens a parcel, of having a very enjoyable meal and remembering that for a long time.

Instead of knitting mittens for our child (who perhaps has always wanted home-made mittens) do we go to the store trying desperately to decide whether to buy the electric toy of this sort or that, and ending up buying both of them?

Instead of having a good, simple, delicious meal, do we overdo it and make enough food to feed ten people for a week (meant for five people for one day), therefore feeling guilty about all that good food going to waste, and badly overeating? And later only remembering that we ate too much instead of

remembering how good it was?

Or most important of all, have we forgotten the real purpose of this celebration? Have we forgotten that this is the celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ? Have we forgotten that this is the time for peace and contentment?

Maybe it would be a good idea to slow down from our busy schedule in life and sit down and write a note to friends and relatives who have not heard from us for some time. (Not just a card either, but a note or letter.)

Maybe it would be a good time to leisurely go downtown or to a shopping centre and enjoy their decorations and displays, perhaps buying a thing or two and not care whether they are inexpensive. (And remember, no running through - go slowly - sometimes they also have music in the stores.)

Hmm. Maybe it would be a good time to try that long-forgotten recipe I got from mother years ago but never seemed to have time to try out. I think that if a person has peace of mind, it is contagious, and the next person will get it too. I think that I will try to have that old feeling of simplicity, peace and contentment during this Christmas. And when I listen to the message again at Christmas, and when the church bells are ringing again telling us about the birth of baby Jesus, I hope that you too will join me in praising the Lord.

Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men.



'SILENT NIGHT'



(CHURCH MICE GET CREDIT FOR HYMN)

The world's best-known and most loved Christmas carol — "Silent Night" — owes its existence to a family of pesky church mice who chewed a hole in the organ bellows of an Austrian church more than 150 years ago.

On the day before Christmas in 1818 at Oberndorf, Austria, Franz Gruber, the organist for the church of St. Nicholas, sat down to practise for the midnight services, but found the organ inoperable. A search revealed a hole had been chewed by mice in the bellows.

Father Joseph Mohr, the town's priest, had a solution. He produced some simple lines to a carol that could be accompanied by a guitar.

Franz hurried home, but doubted that he'd be able to come up with a tune on such short notice. Little by little, a melody stole from his heart and into his fingers at the keyboard of his spinet.

That night in the Church of St. Nicholas, "Stille Nacht" (Silent Night) was sung for the first time by a small group of children, a priest and an organist.

The carol travelled quickly over Europe, Great Britain, and eventually America. Today there is scarcely a place in which the carol is not sung during the Christmas season.

ICELANDIC NEWSLETTER

by Ninna Campbell NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 1981:

Solli Sigurdson - 437-2923
Harold Halldorson - 439-0758
Chris MacNaughton - 454-2172
Ninna Campbell - 476-3612
Colleen Lycar - 476-0626
Sam Thorkelson - 465-3985
Berkly Letourneau - 962-2345
Curtis Halldorson - 466-2408
(Heritage Days liaison)

A combination of good food, good friends and good weather made our Pot Luck Supper on

November 2nd at the Scandinavian Centre a most successful event. Following the supper the annual meeting took place and the above Board of Directors was elected.

The Christmas Party will be at the Scandinavian Centre on December 7th at 2:00 p.m. in the Viking Room.

Watch for more Thorablot announcements for February 28, 1981.

MERRY CHRISTMAS, EVERYONE!

CULTURE, ALL IS CULTURE

by Bob Burt

The November 4th meeting of Torske Klubben was attended by over 60 people; it was Youth Night, a culture was provided by the Hon. Mary Le Messurier, Minister for Culture for Alberta.

Ms. Le Messurier was born and educated in Montreal, where she received her B.Ph.Ed. and also became a Registered Technician in Haemotology. She is married to Ernest D. Le Messurier and has four children, Willa, Jill, Tim and Andrew. The family moved to Edmonton from Halifax in 1971, and Mary was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1979. She was subsequently placed in charge of the Department of Culture.

Madame Le Messurier has been working hard for the many nationalities represented in Alberta and is a firm believer in the Multicultural program for all

groups. She spoke of the teaching of other languages in schools and the gathering interest here. She expressed the opinion that traditional cultures should be maintained, but that citizens should be Canadians first.

Astrid Hope and Bea Huser were present to display the accomplishments of the annual Language Camps, and Sons of Norway President, Janette Burt, was present to bring greetings and inform members of upcoming events. President of Aspelund Lodge, Red Deer, Thelma Dorin, and her husband Emil, were also guests.

Sev Berg was named 'Boss' for the coming year and his support committee will be named at the December 9th meeting. This evening will be one of the favourite suppers of the year — Ladies' Night. Guest speaker for the occasion will be Hon. Grant MacEwan.

ODDS & ENDS (in Copenhagen)

RENT-A-FUR

Ladies who visit Copenhagen this winter can rent-a-fur to warm them against the chill of a cold Danish night. The Tourist Association of Copenhagen can arrange rentals of fur coats for ladies who don't have room in their luggage to pack a heavy coat; Low cost for a Copenhagen rent-a-fur is US-\$130 a week for a Nutria Mink, while highest weekly cost is US-\$570 for a Saga Fur.

USE "USE IT"

Young visitors to Copenhagen need never feel at a loss where to sleep or eat inexpensively, how to meet other young people, where to find a new travel companion, etc. - USE IT, the information centre set up by Copenhagen municipality to assist young travellers, will help. - The centre occupies a large building in the old part of Copenhagen and runs its own theatre, film club, restaurant, discussion groups, in short a host of get-together activities, which attract the local inhabitants as well as passing travellers. Do look in next time you are in Copenhagen - it is a most useful and interesting place. (USE IT, Magstraede 14, Copenhagen).

USE IT has published a few very helpful folders, one of which will assist you in sightseeing Copenhagen on your own by public transportation for the amount of 75 cents. - These folders are available from the Danish Tourist Board, 151 Bloor Street West, Toronto or from USE IT in Copenhagen.

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CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS FROM ACROSS THE SEA



IT'S WINTER WONDERLAND TIME IN FINLAND: Cross country skiing is the national pastime here. American visitors thrill to a new experience as the ski trails, many marked and illuminated for night skiing, take them over breath-takingly beautiful terrain, over tracks that wind among glistening snow-laden trees (as seen above), where peace and tranquility draw them close to nature; add a new dimension to their winter sports activities.

(Photo credit: Finland National Tourist Office).

by Astrid Hope

Christmas is surely the happiest and most exalted day of the year — a time of celebration and peace and goodwill toward all.

Observed in the church, in the home, and in the heart, this season of great joy and renewed faith is honoured and celebrated all over the world.

VARIED AS THE PEOPLE:

Christmas celebrations in Canada are as varied as the people themselves and the traditional way of their ancestors. Many Scandinavians, too, have intermarried and met with the customs and traditions of another country. The very particular and cherished traditions of each add colour and pleasure to its international observance.

EARLY CELEBRANTS

PERSECUTED:

The Christmas holiday, with its spirit of warmth and love, began

during a period besieged by doubt and uncertainty, and often martyrdom. Early celebrants were persecuted and forced to observe this holy time in hiding. In 350 A.D., December 25th was proclaimed by Pope Julius I to be the date of the Nativity, although there is no historical evidence to substantiate that date.

For almost 2,000 years Christmas has been observed by untold numbers of people, in each in his own way. As its glorious message travelled around the world and across the seas, it was celebrated with much pomp and elegance, with brilliant displays and gifts, in silent prayer and worship, in contemplation of the spirit and its true meaning. Traditions and customs, both reverent and merry, vary from country to country.

IN FRANCE —

it's Noel, midnight mass held in magnificently lighted churches and

cathedrals, attended by almost everyone excepting young children. 'Le reveillon', a late supper, is eaten after midnight mass. To make sure they receive a gift from 'le pere Noel' or 'le petit Jesus', the youngsters place a shoe in front of the Christmas tree or fireplace before they are tucked in. Part of their Christmas tradition is the bringing in of the Yule Log, which is cut from a special tree by the father, placed in the fireplace, and lit with a brand from last year's log. The resulting fire represents the light that comes to earth on Christmas day.

IN GREECE —

ageless customs persist in the villages along the Mediterranean coast. One archbishop went privately to a pirate captain who blockaded a small port and threatened to starve the town, and offered all the gold and jewels of the church if he would leave the people unharmed. Each year after-

wards the townspeople celebrated their deliverance with small gifts in the name of St. Nicholas. To the Greeks, who love a good meal, Christmas means the end of a 40-day fast and the beginning of much revelry, mixed well with religious devotion and a bit of superstition from earlier days. Immediately before Christmas, Greek women prepare traditional holiday dishes of pork and 'Christopsomo' (Christ's bread), a sweet loaf baked in a variety of shapes and sizes, decorated with walnuts and 'skarkantzolos', a twelve-day log. 'Kallikantzuroi' are goblins which emerge at Christmas from the bowels of the earth.

IN SPAIN —

the humblest home at Christmas (La Navidad) is adorned by the Nativity scene. Modelled of clay, these colourful figures make a stirring display on a table or mantle. Even Madrid's Plaza Mayor, the splendid 16th Century square, has

a colourful market of these hand-made figurines. Gifts are distributed by 'Three Wise Men' on the night of January 6th; Santa Claus is not a familiar figure in Spain.

IN ITALY —

where Christmas is known as 'Il Nasia', it's the 'presepio' or elaborate illuminated Christmas Creche wreathed in periwinkle and lemon blossoms. They have 'Befana', the old woman of Christmas, carrying a bag on her back, who rewards good children with gifts. A piece of coal is supposedly left for children who have not been good. The holiday is highlighted by the Novena, a series of church services. Their dazzling array of delicacies includes 'pan dolce', a special bread; 'capitone', a kind of eel; 'tortelline', neat stuffed pasta; and 'torrone', a sweet nougat.

Continued on page 8

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CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

Continued from page 7



IN ENGLAND —
to this day the Christmas pantomime, a highly-esteemed public entertainment, enriches English pageantry, very often Dickens' immortal classic "A Christmas Carol". In homes it's bringing in the Yule Log, hanging the mistletoe, 'decking the halls' with holly and ivy (remnants of Druid ritual), fruitcake, plum pudding and mince pies. Boxing Day originated in England — the more fortunate sent boxes to the poor. Here is celebrated perhaps the most musical Christmas. It was a tradition on Christmas Eve for groups of friends to gather together and go from house to house to have a 'jolly good time' singing carols; they were sometimes awarded with a soul-warming wassail or a small gift of money. Carol-singing comes down the centuries from feudal times when castle halls resounded with feasting and merry-making at Christmas, and travelling minstrels went from place to place singing songs. Celebrations last until January 6th which is known as 'Twelfth Night'.

IN SWITZERLAND —
young people on their way to midnight church services on Christmas Eve visit nine fountains, and at each they take three sips of water. Legend has it that if they do this, they will find their future wife or husband waiting at the church

door. Many of the family gatherings are conducted on the ski-slopes of the Alps, chasing the first snow of winter.

IN GERMANY —
the first Christmas tree originated. Legend has it that Martin Luther improved a Christmas tree in an effort to explain to his wife and children the impression the night sky made on him. He placed lighted candles on the branches of a fir and saw a myriad of stars in them! Families of German ancestry usually celebrate Christmas by going to visit their grandmothers, if they are still living. The grandmother has a tree decorated with so many goodies it reminds one of Hansel and Gretel. Gifts are placed under the tree. Stuffed goose and red cabbage form part of the traditional Christmas dinner.

IN HOLLAND —
it's St. Nickolas, known to have been a Spanish bishop. Before the Reformation, Dutch children pictured St. Nick riding about on his pony 'Swarte Piet' (Black Pete). At dusk he goes about keeping track of naughty children; then the animal turned into a white horse or mule, giving the children their presents. The horse and rider then disappeared to Spain for another year. 'Taai-taai' and 'speculaas' are traditional pastry favourites during the 'Sinterklaas' season. They have St. Nicholas Eve parties where guests receive a gift accompanied by a rhyming verse in a surprise package wrapped to conceal their contents. The children put their wooden shoes on the doorstep for St. Nicholas to fill.

IN MEXICO —
Christmas is celebrated with the 'posada', a religious procession in which Joseph's fruitless search for shelter on his journey to Bethlehem is dramatically re-enacted. They have the 'pinata', decorated to look like an animal or a doll, containing an earthenware jar which must be broken in a blind-fold game in order to collect the toys and candies concealed inside. Market stalls (puestos) are set up by Indians where Christmas toys and trinkets are sold. Trees are decorated with small sombreros and serapes; the base is surrounded by brightly coloured paper poppies.

IN JAPAN —
'Meri Kurusumasu' is a warm, wonderful celebration for Christians! They visit hospitals and cheer patients with carols and dramatic presentations, and gifts of candles and cakes are received by everyone. Ornaments on their trees are either pagoda or fan-shaped.

IN POLAND AND THE UKRAINE —
St. Nicholas also brings presents to families. Celebrations begin Christmas Eve as soon as the first star appears. All things borrowed must have been returned. The whole family gathers round the table and share unleavened bread which has been blessed by the priest. Best wishes are showered on everyone present. Straw is placed under the white tablecloth as a reminder that Jesus was born in a stable, and an extra place was always set so that any weary traveller stopping at the house

could be made welcome. Christmas dinner consists of twelve dishes commemorating the twelve apostles. At midnight there is mass. Since the Greek Orthodox Church, to which the majority of Polish and Ukrainian people belong, celebrates the Julian calendar, their celebrations take place two weeks later, or on January 6th.

IN AFRICA —
a love offering at the church is part of the spiritual experience of Christmas in the Congo. Those who attend holiday services are expected to come forward with a gift for Jesus on his birthday.

IN SWEDEN —
on December 13, Lucia, Queen of Light, leads a procession of young women on visits to homes and public places. Dressed in flowing white gowns and wearing crowns of lignonberry leaves glowing with 9 lighted candles, Lucia and her maidens serve coffee and special saffron buns to all and brings light to people in the dark of winter (linked to the ancient Northern celebration of the mid-winter solstice). Historically she was a martyred Sicilian virgin; the Swedes heard her story and adopted her. In Canada she is a teen-ager chosen queen by popular vote. Festivities in Sweden always include 'kalvsylta' (veal head-cheese), 'leverpastej' (liver pate), 'skottbullar' (meat balls), 'kokta gresfoter' (boiled pig's feet), and other foods.

IN FINLAND —
the sauna is the pivot around which life turns, so naturally a sauna and dressing in one's finery precedes the observance of The Mass of Christ. After-sauna parties are also a favourite and relaxing way to celebrate the Yuletide in a log cabin or living room before an open fire. One of the favourite dishes is 'kinkku' (ham braised and prepared in a pastry shell); 'lammasmuhennos' (lamb stew) is a national dish. Stockings are not hung by the children, since Santa Claus visits them in person, most often accompanied by elves, to deliver gifts.

IN ICELAND —
preparations for Christmas begin thirteen days before. On Christmas

Eve a smoked mutton dinner is served and 'vinaterta' (prune layer torte with the flavourful taste of cardamom) is also a part of the meal. The family opens presents and sings carols in the living room. They have the traditional story of the witch named Gryla who used to search out bad children and took thirteen of them away. The children of Iceland became so frightened of Gryla and her thirteen bad Santa sons that in recent years this story has not been told.

IN DENMARK AND NORWAY —
traditions are similar. There is the thorough housecleaning and baking. The Christmas pig plays an important part of the Jule ritual. Fourteen kinds of cookies must be baked and on hand. Before partaking of the Christmas meal, sheaves of grain (Julenek) are placed outside on a pole, broom or tree as a reminder that every living thing deserves special Christmas thoughts. In addition porridge is taken to the barn for the small 'Julenisser' (Christmas elves) so that they will have their Christmas dinner. Good luck prevails the following year should the porridge disappear. In Norway lutefisk is the tradition for Christmas Eve; this is a specially-treated codfish, and the custom is thought to date back to the Vikings. As in other Scandinavian countries a rice-pudding is the predominant dessert, and lucky is the one who finds the almond in it. After supper there is the traditional march around the Christmas tree by the children singing Christmas carols and Julenisser gets the credit for the gifts. Church bells peal for religious services and it is a time for family reunions, visiting, caroling and general celebrations with the 'julebord' laden with festively-decorated melt-in-your-mouth delicacies. Christmas trees are decorated with miniature flags, woven paper heart baskets, birds and yarn dolls. The festive season lasts for twenty days.

MANY TRADITIONS —
From foreign lands across the seas to Canada, Christmas has surely become a festival of many traditions. Despite the differences in its observance, all people share its magical and spiritual joy!

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Guess we have to explain again about subscriptions!

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